Remarks

Claim 1 has been amended to include the features of previous claim 4. Corresponding amendments have been made in each of claims 1, 8 and 10-16.

Claim rejections 35 USC § 103

Applicants have carefully considered the arguments set out in the Office Action dated August 1, 2009, in which the features of claim 1 as currently amended (i.e. previously presented claim 4) are rejected as obvious, based on a combination of Flockhart et al. (US 6,535,601), in further view of Webber (US 6,883,006). Applicants respectfully disagree.

The section of Flockhart cited against the features of present claim 1 (i.e. Figs. 1A and 2) illustrates an Automatic Call Distribution (ACD) system having a series of parallel call queues 121-129. Col. 3, lines 65-67 of Flockhart describe how calls can be enqueued in different queues of the plurality of call queues. It should be noted that neither in the specification nor in the figures of Flockhart is there any suggestion that calls present in a first queue may be linked with calls of a second, parallel queue. While it is true that in Flockhart's system the same call may be featured in a plurality of separate parallel queues (dependent on the skillsets required), there is no connection made between the different queues or, by extension, between the calls contained in the different queues. Each queue is a separate entity processed independently of the remainder of the queues of the system.

With reference to the disclosure of Webber (i.e. Figs. 3A-3C), it is clear that Webber discloses a system wherein individual objects (work queues 302) comprise only a single pointer (pointer field 306) to the next member of the list 301. Webber in no way teaches or suggests a software object having a plurality of pointers to different software objects. Webber is concerned with a circular, singly linked list, and the efficient operation thereof. Even if Webber did contain pointers to multiple other objects, which it does not, there would still not be a disclosure of pointers from an object in one list to an object in another list.

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Therefore, without prejudice to the contention that the teachings of the disclosures of the two references would not be combined as they represent two different approaches to queuing, it is submitted that even if the teachings of Flockhart and Webber were to be combined as alleged in the Office Action, it is clear that the pointer system disclosed in Webber would operate only in the context of each individual queue disclosed in Flockhart, i.e. each individual queue 121-129 of Flockhart would comprise a series of software objects arranged in a circular, singly linked list. The Applicants respectfully submit that there is no teaching or suggestion that a call present in a first queue of Flockhart may comprise a pointer to a call in a second queue, and Webber fails to supply an analogous teaching in respect of its single circularly linked list. Thus a combination of the teachings of the Flockhart and Webber references in no way reads on to the present invention.
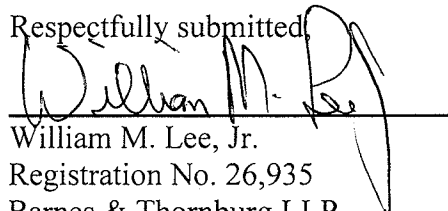
Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that present claim 1 is novel and non-obvious over and above the cited prior art. The same arguments apply to each of the other independent claims which have been amended to include the feature of multiple pointers to objects in different queues, and thus all claims benefit from the same arguments as set forth above in relation to claim 1.

In view of the amendments and arguments made herein, the Applicants respectfully request the Examiner withdraw the rejections, and allow the application.

As this response is being submitted during the fourth month following the Examiner's Office Action, an appropriate Petition for Extension of Time is also submitted herewith.

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Respectfully submitted

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